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FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6571
INFO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 1346
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RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 1384
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RHEFDHP/DIA DHP-1 WASHINGTON DC
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 1316
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 1257
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1346
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0235
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1290
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1251
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUESLE/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI PRIORITY 0007
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1147
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RUEHNO/USEUCOM FMFO BRUSSELS BE
RUEPGBA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 1401
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 1436
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0921
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 7669

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUSHANBE 000204

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [PINR](#) [TI](#)

SUBJECT: NDI LOCAL DIRECTOR DEPARTS

CLASSIFIED BY: Richard Hoagland, Ambassador, EXEC, State.

REASON: 1.4 (b)

¶1. (U) National Democratic Institute (NDI) local Director Gegham Sargsyan left Tajikistan on Wednesday morning, February 1, after a final unannounced police check and brief detention on the evening of January 31. The NDI Director had been wrangling with authorities for the past week or so, since they would not allow him to re-register his Dushanbe residency. On instructions from NDI in Washington, Sargsyan had already planned to depart on February 1.

¶2. (U) Sargsyan called PolOff at 7:50 p.m. Tuesday, saying there were four policemen in his apartment, demanding that he come to the local police precinct for a "two minute procedure." PolOff arrived at the apartment and tried to convince police that this was unnecessary, since Sargsyan was leaving the following day. DCM arrived at the apartment a few minutes later. At that point, Sargsyan agreed to go the precinct police station accompanied by the DCM.

¶3. (C) Once at the precinct, police escorted Sargsyan and DCM to the bare office of the local Commander. The precinct happens to be in the Embassy's neighborhood. The Commander asked Sargsyan his citizenship, which is Armenian. He then asked whether he had any family ties to Iran. Sargsyan said he did. The Commander briefly lectured the DCM about Tajikistan's political situation, saying Tajikistan is not a country like Iran. It is a "secure society, civilized, and building democracy." DCM said he understood Tajikistan very well. DCM added that the Ambassador and Foreign Minister had reached an understanding in principle on NDI and were working to resolve

all problems, including Sargsyan's status. If that had been worked out at such a high level, DCM asked, "why are you holding Sargsyan?" The Commander followed with a few more questions. "Does Sargsyan work for the Embassy?" Answer: no. When will the new Embassy be completed? Answer: This summer. That ended the "procedure." The atmosphere throughout the meeting was serious, but not intimidating.

14. (C) On February 1, DCM reached Sargsyan on the plane before takeoff. Sargsyan thanked the Embassy for the support and said he was sure the police interview would have been difficult without Embassy intervention. He felt the initial police plan was to intimidate him one final time before leaving Tajikistan.

15. (C) The Ambassador will meet with the Deputy Foreign Minister (the Foreign Minister is in London) to strongly protest this latest blatant attempt to keep NDI as marginalized as possible, and will follow up with Foreign Minister Nazarov as soon as he returns.

16. (C) COMMENT: After a long period during which NDI remained unregistered but continued to work normally, the Tajik Security Services resumed harassment and intimidation around the time that Moscow began to publicize the alleged British spy scandal, linking intelligence operatives to NGOs. The Ambassador will continue to press forcefully, making clear that continued pressure on NDI, and other U.S. NGOs, could have serious repercussions for U.S.-Tajik relations. The old guard is alive and well in Tajikistan, but we know there are reformers and the ideological fight for Tajikistan is still on. END COMMENT.

HOAGLAND